Development of forests

†5436. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are liberal in the development of forests;

(b) whether Government keep information about loss due to fire in forests every year;

(c) if so, on how many hectares of land, the vegetation like trees and plants has vanished so far, due to fire incidents in forests;

(d) the measures taken to control fire in forests;

(e) whether Government propose to initiate any movement to encourage replantation programme in those areas, where incidents of fire have taken place; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) Government has been making concerted efforts for conservation and development of forests. Based on the monitoring of forest fires by Forest Survey of India, the losses due to fire were calculated by the Central Government. It is estimated that over 3 million hectares of forest land is affected annually by forest fires. The monetary loss in terms of replacement cost of seedlings annually is around Rs. 440 to 500 crore depending upon the severity of fire incident and type of forest.

(d) Forest protection is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments. However, Central assistance has been provided to all the States for prevention and control of forest fires under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Forest Fire Control and Management' during the Ninth Five Year Plan. Funds have been provided for creation and maintenance of firelines, purchase of fire fighting equipments, improved mobility and communication network, training and awareness and assistance to Joint ForesJ Management Committees. National Guidelines for prevention and control of forest fires have also been issLed to all States in June, 2000. It is proposed to provide funds for the purpose during the Tenth Five Year Plan under the 'Integrated Forest Protection Schemes.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) and (f) Central assistance of Rs. 3999.89 crore has been provided to the States during the Ninth Five Year Plan for afforestation in forest land including areas affected by forest fires. This assistance is to be continued during the Tenth Five Year Plan.

National Forestry Action Programme in Andhra Pradesh

5437. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated National Forestry Action Programme (NFAP) to address the problems of forestry sector;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof;

(c) whether land has been earmarked in Andhra Pradesh for implementation of NFAP; and

(d) if so.the details thereof with main components thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Environment and Forests have formulated National Forestry Action Programme (NFAP), a comprehensive strategic long term plan for the next twenty years to address the issues underlying major problems of the forestry sector in line with the National Forest Policy, 1988. The objective of the NFAP is to bring one-third area of the country under forest/tree cover and to arrest de-forestation for achieving sustainable development of forests.

The National Forestry Action Programme has five main components:

1. Protect Existing Forest Resources: It has three main-sub programmes (i) Forest protection, (ii) Soil and water conservation, and (iii) Protected areas and bio-diversity conservation.

2. Improve Forest Productivity: It has four main sub-programmes (i) Rehabilitation of degraded forest, (ii) Research and technology development, (iii) Development of Non-Wood Forest Products, and (iv) Assisting private initiatives with community participation.

3. Reduce Total Demand: It has three main sub-programmes for efficient uses (i) Fuelwood and fodder, (ii) Timber, and (iii) Non-Wood Forest Products.